New Program Proposal
B.S. in Information Science
University of South Carolina

Summary

The University of South Carolina, School of Library and Information Science, requests approval to offer a program leading to the Bachelor of Science, Information Science, to be implemented in August, 2007 on the USC Columbia main campus.

The proposal was approved by the University of South Carolina's Board of Trustees on April 20, 2006, and submitted for Commission review on May 1, 2006. The program proposal received no substantive comment at the meeting of the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs at its meeting on July 31, 2006.

The purpose of the program is to prepare students either for careers related to information science or for graduate study in library and information science and other related disciplines.

The need for the program is evidenced through forecasts published by the federal Bureau of Labor and Statistics which expect jobs in the information sector to grow much faster than average as organizations continue to adopt and integrate increasingly sophisticated technologies. The proposal notes that this program will not duplicate any existing program at the University of South Carolina and that there is minimal overlap with existing programs. The proposal also notes the differences in this proposed degree program through comparisons to undergraduate majors in computer science and information systems, the undergraduate major in business administration and the undergraduate major in technology support and training management. There are no public or private colleges or universities in South Carolina which offer an undergraduate major in Information Science. Approval of this proposal would, however, be consistent with a recent trend in which approximately half of the top-ranked institutions in the nation with graduate programs in Library and Information Science have developed undergraduate programs.

Projected enrollment for the proposed program is 20 students (20 FTE) in the first year, increasing to 40 (42 FTE) students in the second year; 60 students (64 FTE) in the third year; 80 (86 FTE) students in the fourth year; and 100 students (108 FTE) in the fifth and subsequent years. If enrollment and program completion projections are met, the program will meet the Commission's productivity standards.

The proposed program will consist of a minimum of 126 semester hours, including 72 hours in general education requirements; 36 hours in major requirements (composed of 12 hours of required courses, 12 hours of related required courses, and 12 hours of information science electives); and 18 hours of electives. An internship in information science is required and will include supervised field experiences in a library, media center, or other information agency with relevance to the student's professional goals.

Fourteen (14) new courses associated with the proposed program will be necessary for teaching the program. These include courses in information science, use, literacy, storage and retrieval, management, research methods, policy, knowledge management, communication and transfer, architecture, and infrastructure. The proposal notes that no national or regional accreditation option currently exists for this type of undergraduate program in Information Science and that the American Library Association's Committee on Accreditation endorses only the Master's degree in Library and Information Science.

Faculty for the proposed program will be drawn from the field of Library and Information Science. The proposal notes that nine (9) faculty members who hold the terminal degree will teach in the program, as well as four (4) instructors who hold the MLIS degree. Two new Ph.D.-prepared faculty members in library and information science or the equivalent with undergraduate teaching experience will be hired. These new faculty members will devote one hundred percent (100%) of their time to the program. One of the new faculty members will be added in the first year and the second in the third year. One currently-employed faculty member will be named Assistant or Associate Director for the program. This individual will receive a one-course reduction in teaching load during each academic year beginning in academic year 2007 in order to provide release time for research, consulting, conferences and curriculum development in the new program.

The proposal also notes that thirteen (13) of the existing fourteen (14) faculty members are expected to devote approximately fifteen percent (15%) of their time to the new program in a teaching capacity. The fourteenth existing faculty member will assume administrative oversight of the program for approximately twenty-five percent (25%) of professional load. Total FTE faculty committed to the program will be 3.1 FTE (14 headcount) in the first year and 4.1 FTE (15 headcount) by the fifth year of the program's implementation.

The proposal indicates that the existing physical plant is expected to be adequate to provide space for the program for at least the first five years. The proposal states that approximately $10,000 in new computer equipment and office furnishings for the new program faculty will be needed in each of the first and third years. Additionally, a total of approximately $10,000 in computer equipment and instructional media technology will be added in the second, fourth, and fifth years, with anticipated maintenance costs of

approximately $1,000 beginning in the program's second year and increasing in $1,000 increments in subsequent years.

According to the proposal, the strong collection which has been built over many years to support the MLIS degree will provide significant support for the proposed undergraduate program in Information Science. In his letter of support which accompanied the program summary, the Director of the Thomas Cooper Library substantiated this fact.

Categories of costs for the first five years of the program's implementation include program administration ($15,000); faculty salaries ($480,000); support staff ($240,000); supplies and materials ($36,000); equipment ($50,000); and equipment maintenance ($10,000). New costs for the program are estimated to begin at $108,000 in the first year, increasing to $110,000 in the second year, $202,000 in the third year, $204,000 in the fourth year, and $207,000 in the fifth year. Total estimated new costs for the program during the first five years will be $831,000.

Shown below are the estimated Mission Resource Requirement (MRR) costs to the state and new costs not funded by the MRR associated with implementation of the proposed program for its first five years. Also shown are the estimated revenues projected under the MRR and Resource Allocation Plan as well as student tuition.

Year	Estimated MRR Cost for Proposed Program	Extraordinary (Non-MRR) Costs for Proposed Program	Total Costs	State Appropriation	Tuition	Total Revenue
2007-08	$227,040	$0	**$227,040**	N/A	$187,230	**$187,230**
2008-09	$476,784	$0	**$476,784**	$122,694	$393,804	**$516,499**
2009-10	$726,528	$0	**$726,528**	$257,473	$600,379	**$857,851**
2010-11	$976,272	$0	**$976,272**	$392,251	$806,953	**$1,199,204**
2011-12	$1,226,016	$0	**$1,226,016**	$527,029	$1,013,528	**$1,540,557**

These data demonstrate that if the new program meets its enrollment projections and contains costs as they are shown in the proposal, it will generate revenues to match costs as estimated in the MRR by the second year of its implementation. The institution has made assurances that the resources exist for meeting the costs of the program.

In summary, the proposed program leading to the Bachelor of Science in Information Science will provide opportunities through which students may gain knowledge in the cognitive, social, technological and organizational roles of information in all its forms. The University's well established Master of Science in Library and Information Science and its recently approved Ph.D. in the field provide a strong foundation for adding this program. Students will focus on the needs of information users, learn the value of information content, and the application of technology in order to develop a flexible and highly portable set of skills for the 21st century workplace and/or for preparation for graduate work in the field.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend favorably to the Commission the program proposal leading to the Bachelor of Science in Information Science at USC-Columbia, to be implemented in Fall 2007, provided that no "unique cost" or special state funding be required or requested.